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For circulation among Ours only



VERY REV. FR. GENERAL TO FR. HENRY BARON

on Sodalities of Our Lady

On the occasion of the two Directors' Congresses held by our French Fathers in 1926 and 1927 (1), Very Rev. Father General wrote as follows to Father Baron, (Prov. Champagne) the organizer of the Congresses.

I.

"I see that you are making special efforts for **Sodalities of men and young men**. It was really for them that the Sodalities were founded, and for a long time no other persons could become members. Even when, for good reasons, Sodalities were formed for women, the institution was still primarily intended for men and youths.

"**If today the Sodalities are somewhat less in favor, must this not be attributed** in some degree **to ourselves**? Secular priests and religious of other orders who envy us the possession of these incomparable weapons often marvel to see Our Fathers letting the Sodalities drop or shelving them with venerable relics of bygone times. Such conduct is specially inopportune in an age when so much is made of the **power of societies with select membership** and of the necessity of training and using them to widen the Church's field of action. And while other people, both good and bad vaunt this very old principle as if it were something new, and make the most enthusiastic use of it, shall we give up our Sodalities as if they were obsolete?

"**New Societies** spring up about us every day one after the other; some of them by their sterility belying the hopes placed in them; others producing considerable true or at least apparent good. But they do not last, and often disappear with their founders. None of them compete with our Sodalities for efficacy and stability.

"Indeed, the special mark of the Sodality is that it is unsurpassed by any other institution in procuring the sanctification of its followers and their apostolic formation, and that in it the exercise of the apostolate flows from the abundance of the interior life. Truly the Sodality may be called another supper-chamber where the Sodalists are joined in prayer with Mary the Mother of Jesus and are transformed by the Holy Ghost into Apostles.

"Why then do we find the Sodality *below its proper level?* Most certainly not because its internal principle is less suited to the times, for that principle is nothing less than the "*soul of every apostolate*". Not from its external organization being out of harmony with the age; in this respect the Sodality is wonderfully flexible and adaptable. Is not the cause of this unsatisfactory condition to be sought **rather in ourselves?**

Some of Ours think that the ideal of perfection set before the Sodalist must be toned down so as to attract greater numbers. They deceive themselves. **Generous young people have high aspirations**, they abhor mediocrity, and so they turn to other institutions to find what Ours do not dare to give them.

(1) See "A. O." 1927, p. 70, and for a fuller account the booklet, "Journées Mariales" edited by *Fr. Henry Baron*, Provincial Secretary of the Sodalities in the Province of *Champagne*.

"Then there is the **hankering for show and novelty** which tends to change the nature of the Sodalities and weaken them, and to make men prefer activities which make a greater stir and attract public attention, in which much activity is displayed but little accomplished. To labor perseveringly in obscurity is much less pleasant but how much more fruitful!

Lastly **the spirit of initiative** generates in many an **excessive individualism** especially in the conduct of apostolic undertakings. Such men wish to have their own particular scheme and to put their own personal stamp upon it, and they dislike to contribute only indirectly and secondarily to the general work of the Society and the Church."

II.

"That the Sodalities may prosper and give the results they should, **all of Ours must** have them at heart and **cooperate efficaciously** in fostering them. The Society counts the Sodalities among the activities most proper to it and embraces them with special affection."

III.

"*With my whole heart I pray that Ours may* **understand** *more and more* **the true spirit and the incomparable power of the Sodalities.** One cannot doubt the great vogue and effectiveness which they would enjoy in France today if every son of the Society would support them with the same zeal, the same devotion, and above all the same conviction, which religious of other orders bring to the organizations peculiar to their own Institutes: such as third orders, the Rosary, and even the simplest confraternities (in all of which, those religious give us a very praiseworthy example).

"The Provincial Secretaries for Sodalities and your magazine "*Les Cahiers Notre Dame*" should make it their first care that the Sodalities become better known and esteemed. Unfortunately, many, even among Ours, entertain an idea of the Sodality which is very vague and incomplete.

"The above-mentioned Secretaries will comply with my desires as often as they inform me of their work and of the results obtained among Ours and among externs."

Until recently the Sodality at **St. Xavier's College** (a member of *Bombay University*) had young people of both sexes in its membership. The Director, Father Emil Kaufmann, was desirous of having separate Sodalities so that he might better adapt his talk to his audience. It was feared by some that the Sodalists would be offended by the change, but on the contrary, they are much pleased. The Young Men's Sodality has even a record number, 142, and the chapel is much too small for them. As there are a *thousand* students in St. Xavier's and only *ten* of Ours on the faculty, it in easy to understand why there was only one Sodality for both sexes.

MENS' SODALITY JUBILEES

The **first** *Sodality of Our Lady* **in Munich,** Bavaria, was erected **in 1577** for *students.* This was soon followed by others for *nobles* and *the learned;* In 1610, the *Citizens'* Sodality was formed; in 1644, the *Young Men's.* Many of those Sodalities are still in existence, and their members gladly joined in celebrating last year the 350th anniversary of the foundation of the First Sodality, taking occasion therefrom to revive their fervor in Our Lady's service.

On June 12, 1,200 Sodalists heard Mass and received Holy Communion at the hands of the Auxiliary Bishop of Munich. Later, the Directors and Officers held a joint meeting, presided over by H. E. **Cardinal Faulhaber** who also spoke. The subjects treated were: *The Fundamentals of the Sodality* (**Father Finster,** Prov. Austria); *the Sodalist in the Sodality* — what he seeks there, what he finds, and what he gives to the world (by a **lay Sodalist** of Cologne); *The Sodality and youth* (by **a secular priest**).

4,000 men Sodalists gathered in the Church during the afternoon, and were addressed by **Father Rupert Mayer,** S. J. (Prov. Upper Germany); and in the evening there was a social meeting.

During the morning and afternoon of the next day, **the Directors** discussed ways and means of *directing* and *spreading* the *Sodalities* and the Sodality *publication:* much was said too of the extreme usefulness of the Sodalities in solving *modern pastoral problems.*

Sodality statistics of the Archdiocese of Munich & Freising.

Number of Sodd.	FOR	MEMBERS
1	Priests (1)	1,081
6	Boys	853
23	Youths	660
18	YY. In boarding schools	2,095
6	Students	676
7	Certain Classes	1,243
18	Men & Youths	10,988
220	Young women	15,220
6	Married Wom.	2,965
Total 305		35,781

The **Munich Sodality** directed by *Father Rupert Mayer, S. J.,* assisted by *Father Raymond Haas, S. J.,* numbers 5,000 members. It is divided into 33 groups according to parishes: 16 of these groups are presided over by other religious (Benedictines, Capuchins, Franciscans etc.) who have charge of parishes; the other 27

(1) Founded in 1911, divided into 28 groups.

groups receive a talk every month from Father Mayer or Fr. Haas. Each group has its General Communions in its own parochial church; once a month in our church of St. Michael, a sermon is given for all the Sodalists, which is attended by them in great numbers and with the same fidelity as the ordinary meetings in the parish churches.

These men Sodalists are leaders in Catholic workingmen's societies, works of charity and politics.

II.

300 years of Sodality life in **Coesfeld,** *Westphalia*, was the occasion of great celebrations held there June 26, 27, 1927. A week of apposite sermons marked the preparations, and on the feast-day itself great numbers of Sodalists received Holy Communion, hearing another Mass in thanksgiving. In the afternoon gatherings in the church and in the Sodality hall, **100 Sodalities of Men and Youths** were represented by delegations, each with its own banner.

On the second day of the centenary, the **Directors and consultors** joined in long and serious **discussions** relating to the welfare of the Sodalities. Much of the good done by this jubilee must be ascribed to Ours of the **Lower German Province,** especially **Fathers, Christ, Horstmann, Kettenmeyer, and Schmitt.**

The **Sodalities of the Seminary of Villa Devoto, Buenos Aires**, Argentina, asked the Bishops of the Republic to petition the Sacred Congregation of Rites for the approval of a **votive mass for ecclesiastical vocations.** The Bishops unanimously approved the idea and began to study the text of the mass proposed by the Sodalists.

It would no doubt help much if Sodalities in other countries would ask the same thing of their Bishops and thus contribute somewhat to the increase of the laborers in the vineyard.

Austrian Sodality Statistics

On the occasion of the canonization of St. Peter Canisius, a meeting of German-speaking Directors was held in Rome on May 22, 1925, at which it was determined to compile the statistics of the Sodalities of men and youths in Austria (1).

The results of the investigation were published in "*Fahne Mariens*," Wien, 1927, p. 253, and we learn therefrom that the Sodalities in Austria at that time numbered:

21	for	priests	with	1,678	members.
6	„	seminarists	„	532	„
105	„	men	„	6.892	„
2	„	men, school-teachers .	„	128	„
5	„	merchants	„	614	„
5	„	workingmen	„	415	„
13	„	Univ. students	„	601	„
77	„	Medic. students . . .	„	4,050	„
96	„	Boys & youths	„	3 920	„
65	„	Children	„	2,816	»

In all, 395 Sodd. with 21,646 members.

(1) The population of Austria is about 6,500,000, not all of whom are Catholics.

APOSTOLIC SODALITIES IN ANCIENT CHINESE MISSIONS

By Father Leopold Brellinger. (Prov. Austria).
Maison des Hautes Etudes, Tientsin, China.

That the purpose of the Sodalities of Our Lady is apostolic is clear from the testimony of our Fathers who labored long ago in China. Thus Father de Rougemont in his *Historia Tartaro-Sinica* (Louvain, 1673, p. 193, n. 1333) states that by the year 1664, 4 0 Sodalities had been erected in different Provinces of China, that the Sodalists, who had been chosen from the more fervent neophytes, besides tending to their own individual devotion and perfection, were working for the conversion of the pagans, and that their work in union with that of the missionaries was bringing into the Church at that time, from 5,000 to 6,000 converts a year. (Cf. *Delplace, Histoire des Congregations de la Sainte Vierge*, p. 80, 81, *Desclée, Lille, 1884*).

Easily the leader in this good work, was the *Men's Sodality* which, under the title of the Blessed Sacrament was flourishing in **Pekin** in the year 1706, the principal purpose of which was **to extend the reign of Christ**. It was divided into four sections made up of Christian men who were devoting themselves with extraordinary fervor to the practice of virtue and the salvation of souls.

The first Section, under the patronage of St. Ignatius, cared for the instruction of *neophytes*, the conversion of *bad Christians*, and the baptism of newly-born *infants*.

The second Section, with St. Joseph as its patron, strove to see that the dying should receive the *last sacraments*, in time; then they assisted and encouraged them in their *last moments* and finally they did their utmost to see that t e dead should receive *Christian burial* free from all superstitious rites.

The third Section, under the auspices of St. Francis Xavier, consisted of educated Christians who were constantly employed both in reading books on religion at home, and assisting in church at the explanations and defense of the Faith, with a view to working effectively for the conversion of the pagans. In Chinese, this section was called "*ming dau hui*„ (Society of Experts on Christian Doctrine).

The fourth and last of the Sections, with the Holy Angel as its protectors, devoted itself to securing instruction for Christian children; and for this purpose they brought the children to church every Sunday for *catechism*. They also attended to the *baptism of children abandoned* by their infidel parents.

Each Section had a prefect and two assistants who were aided by subordinate officials; all of these officers being elected annually.

Four times a year there was a *general meeting* of the Sodalists with a General Communion and an extraordinary grant of indulgences. Besides, there were *special* meetings every month in which the Sodalists *reported*

on the works of mercy performed in the preceding month, and made proposals for the coming month. Matters considered worthy of special mention were recorded and at the general meeting, after the prefect had offered them to God with a brief prayer, they were read, the purpose being to promote individual piety, and also to foster apostolic zeal. (*Letter of Father Bouvet in the year 1706: Lettres edif., t. 10, p. 45 sq., Lyon, 1819*).

SODALITY SCHOOLS

DIRECTED BY FATHER LORD

In the December number, 1927, page 89, we gave a number of documents which explain the character of the Sodality Schools now being conducted in the large cities of Middle-Western United States by Father Daniel A. Lord, editor of « *The Queen's Work* » and President of the « Jesuit Sodality Directors' Association of the United States ».

After the Sodality School at St. Louis, Mo., came that of **Loyola University, Chicago, Ill.,** where the ground had been excellently prepared by the *Inter-School Student Conference on Religious Activities*, held at the University, May 26, 1927, under the guidance of the College Sodality. (« *A. O.* », 1927 p. 51). The School lasted during Oct. 21, 22, 23, the colleges, etc., represented numbering 25, the Sodalists 195, and the faculty members 30. A **Sodality Union** was formed.

On opening the campaign in **Cincinnati, Ohio,** Father Lord prepared the way to greater success by visiting each school during the two days preceding the Sodality School. The result was that more delegates came than in St. Louis or Chicago, although Cincinnati has less schools than either of those cities. 17 schools sent 250 student delegates and about 35 professors. **A Sodality Union** was formed under the presidency of St. Xavier's College, and the students took the pledge of the *Knights and Handmaids of the Blessed Sacrament.*

Rockhurst College (Jesuit) in Kansas City, Mo., had a Sodality School in mid-December in which 15 schools participated through 450 delegates and 50 professors, among whom were 20 religious sisters. *The College Sodality* was largely responsible for the numerous attendance, as its members regarded themselves as the *hosts* of the participating schools, and had covered the college walls with large signs, reading « *Beat Chicago's Record!* » etc. A Sodality Union was formed.

At St. Mary's College, Kansas, there were in attendance 9 schools, represented by 116 delegates and 23 religious sisters. Sodalists took the *K. B. S.* and *H. B. S.* pledges, and formed a *Sodality Union.*

« **Marygrove** » a new Catholic women's college at **Detroit,** Michigan, affiliated to our University there, asked for a school, which was attended by religious sisters from 22 high schools which are directed by the same congregation. **Notre Dame College, Cleveland,** Ohio, also had a series of conferences on the Sodality by Father Lord.

« *Because We Want To... The Free Lance of the Queen* » is the title of a series of mimeographed bulletins, issued from the offices of « *The Queen's Work* », in which brief notices are given of the Sodality Schools already held, together with forecasts of coming Schools and a few pertinent questions as to the fidelity with which the newly organized Sodalists are striving to carry out their new program.

Results of the Sodality Schools.

Naturally, it is too soon to speak of *permanent* results, but there are evident signs that the good seed is growing. For instance:

On Dec. 8th, due to the invitation of the **St. Louis University Sodality,** the University Church was filled with Sodalities from the University and from affiliated girls' colleges and from some of the high schools, and it is worthy of note that *more boys than girls* were present.

Again, the last two months have witnessed a very remarkable increase in student bodies of membership in the *Knights and Handmaids of the Blessed Sacrament.* Some non-Jesuit schools have enrolled almost all their students.

Lastly, *correspondence* is being kept up by the officers of the *Sodality Union* with members, as we note from a number of letters issued at Loyola University, Chicago, Ill.: colleges, etc., which did not participate in the Schools, receive *offers of help*, etc.; *general communions* for particular intentions are suggested with a view to keeping consciousness of the union alive; the Catholic Action Section of the Loyola College Sodality exhorts each member to be an *advocate and personal exponent of Catholic College Education;* the Catholic Literature Section of the same Sodality reissues its « *All Year Round Reading List.* ».

Bressanone, Italy. The **Theologian's Sodality** in the seminary has 65 members. In meetings held outside the chapel, the Director has given a series of talks on the *history of the Sodalities* and on the *manner of founding the Sodality. The Liturgical Section* has lectured *on the Mass* as sacrifice, the manner of offering it; the historical development of the ceremonies and on explaining the Mass from the pulpit.

(" *Fahne Mariens,*" Wien, 1927, p. 182).

TOWARDS THE ALTAR

Why become a priest ?

By Father Raoul Plus, S. J., (Prov. Champagne).

Editor's Note : Knowing that many Directors of boys' Sodalities will appreciate outlines of talks on vocation, we offer them the following series of outlines prepared by Father Plus for French youth, but easily adaptable to local needs. We are extremely grateful to Father Plus for the privilege of presenting his work in "*Acies Ordinata.*"

To the Question : **Why become a priest ?** one may answer :

Because the office of the priest is
most beautiful,
most difficult,
most necessary,
most fruitful in results.

The most beautiful of occupations :

D. Olier, founder of the Congregation of St. Sulpice used to say : "*God performed two miracles : 'He created the Blessed Virgin and the Priest.'* "

The dignity of the priest arises from his twofold power over the Body of Christ.

1) **Over Christ's natural (or physical) body,** through

a) *The power of consecrating.*

To understand somewhat this extraordinary power, we must consider that the Bl. Sac. is " a remembrance of His wonderful works " — " an unusual miracle never worked before and never to be worked again, not even in Heaven " (Lessius); that a series of " prodigies " is necessary to effect **transubstantiation :** viz : — The perfect extinction of the substance of bread and wine.

— The appearances exist without the substances ;

— The human body exists without its connatural accidents ;

— Presence in many places ;

— Suspension of the law of " *localization,*" i. e. our Lord is present in every part of the consecrated host.

— Painless immolation of the glorious Body.

— The disappearance of Christ's body the moment corruption of the species takes place.

— While immolation is manifold, the sacrifice remains one.

b) *The power of distributing the Bl. Euch.*

Consider the splendor of the priest's office — he must distribute the Eucharist even at the risk of his life.

2. **The priest's power over Christ's mystic body.**

The priest necessarily succeeds Jesus Christ in His work for when the priest speaks, "*Jesus Christ exhorts through Him*" (II Cor.) ; if the priest absolves, Jesus Christ puts the words of pardon in his mouth. If he work miracles, Christ " omnipotent in the priest " converts and transfigures.

Once a man becomes a priest, in all his ministries he is always the ambassador, the minister, the representative, the interpreter of Jesus Christ. If every Christian should be " *another Christ,*" the priest should be so also in a higher degree since his duties are :

1) To **make Jesus known** by preaching.

2) To **beget Jesus in souls** — *by baptism,* grafting new branches on Christ the Vine, branches which will thenceforward lead a divine life ; through the Sacrament of *Penance,* rejoining to the Vine branches which had fallen away through sin ;

3) Working for the growth of Jesus in souls by administering the Sacraments of the Living, exhorting to virtue etc.

Listen to **Lamartine** setting forth the majesty of the priest's ministry :

" In every parish, there is a man who has no family of his own, and yet belongs to all the families there ; he takes the child from the bosom of its mother and never leaves it till the grave ; he blesses and consecrates the cradle, the bed of death and the coffin ; the children love and venerate him ; Christians cast themselves at his feet to weep and confess their greatest secrets ; his bounden duty it is to console all in their troubles of soul and body ; both rich and poor knock at his door : the first to give his alms in secret, the latter to receive it without humiliation. This man to whom everything can be told, whose words fall on minds and souls with all the authority of a divine ambassador — this man is the priest ! "

" Oh, if men only knew, if they truly understood what the priesthood is," wrote **Father Gratry** in his " *Philosophie du Credo,*" p. 242, " there would be too many priests. God, I think, has veiled the splendor and beauty of the Catholic priesthood lest too many should be burned and consumed in its flame. For the priest is God's helper, Christ's apostle, an artery of His pure Heart, a ray of that burning, glowing, loving glory which is the sun of God, destined to cleanse and fertilize the earth.„ (*To be continued*)

HOW HE BECAME A PRIEST

Mgr. Petit de Julleville, *Bishop of Dijon,* France, during the banquet which followed his consecration last year, thus related his vocation to the priesthood :

" At an early age, I began to take an interest in children and young people. When I was studying at the Sorbonne, I used to frequent a patronage on the left bank of the Seine towards Grenelle, and I was so fond of the young boys whom I met there that after a day of work, I often went on foot from the Rue des Ecoles to Auteuil where I was living, just to have the pleasure of meeting one or more of my friends of the patronage in the streets of their district.

It is to the Director of the patronage I speak of that I owe the revelation of my vocation. I was almost twenty. One day he said to me bruskly : " *My boy, you'll be a priest ; you ought to be ; you must be.* „

I was stunned. From that moment, I saw clearly that I could not follow any other course but that which he had just pointed out to me. Nevertheless, I can assure you positively today, *I had never thought of it.* „ (" *La Croix* „, Oct. 1, 1927).

Editor's Note : The connection between works of zeal, such as the Sodality requires of its members, and vocations to the priesthood is quite obvious. Powerful as was the impulse from the priest's remark, it might never have been made, if the young man had not first given himself to work for the good of his neighbor.

WOMEN'S SODALITIES

" Many of Ours „, writes a certain Father, are **not much in favor of women's Sodalities.** These critics make a great deal of the exclusion of women which prevailed up to 1751.

" I think they are wrong. Because since women's Sodalities are **permitted by the Holy See and by our Fathers General,** there must have been good reasons for such action which it is not permitted us to contradict or oppose.

« Besides, everyone can see how much these Sodalities **have done and still do.** Their members are far **more generous** than the men in sacrificing time, money and their own persons.

Moreover, a great change has come over the **position of women** in society and their relations to every sort of labor, activity and learning. By word and deed women often take part with men in matters of the highest importance. Hence they have equal need of *sound principles and piety*, and they should be fitted for *the apostolate* which is a field just as much open to them as to men; in fact, certain apostolic works can be carried on only by women.

Finally, *like mothers, like nations.*

Answer: A good apology indeed for women's Sodalities!

The critics, however, are not really opposed to them as such. They recognize that those Sodalities, with select membership and under sound direction, give great glory to God. What the critics hit at is the disposition on the part of priests to **follow the line of least resistance** and content themselves with Sodalities for women, without expending intelligence, energy, ingenuity, etc., on forming **Sodalities of men**, especially young men and working-men, from which greater results, **greater glory to God,** may reasonably be expected. No matter what advantages of education women may enjoy and in spite of all the equality with men which women may receive under state constitutions, **men continue to be leaders** as in the past; and hence their ideas about religion, their attachment, indifference or positive hostility to religion, will give the dominant tone to public opinion and legislation. Hence the main reason why **greater** efforts and more sacrifices should be made in order to extend the benefits of the Sodality to **men** rather than to women, and to **workingmen** especially, because they are the special prey of **atheistic communism,** and in modern democratic conditions have tremendous power in the state.

Chile. This year also the National Union of Women's Sodalities worked at spreading Sodalities for women, following the lines of the Men's Sodality Federation. 16 of these Sodalists, delegated by their respective bishops, hold frequent conferences.

The **Annual Convention of the Chilean Sodalities** was held October 30, 31, and reported in the *December " Efemerides Marianas "* of Santiago.

MEN CATECHISTS

Directors who are tempted to discouragement in getting male Sodalists to take up apostolic work, may be helped by considering the difficulties experienced by other organizations.

Father Henry du Passage writing in " *Etudes* " (1927, p. 673) of the situation in France, and especially in the archdiocese of Paris, points out that more than twenty years ago Pope Pius X, in an encyclical on the subject, insisted strongly on the absolute necessity of teaching the catechism, and urged the establishment in every parish of a center of the *Christian Doctrine Association,* so as to furnish the pastors with lay-catechists. Yet hardly any result appeared in Paris.

As far back as 1886, *the Volunteer Catechists' Society* had been established in Paris by the then Archbishop and in 1893, the Society had been made an archconfraternity by Leo XIII, but while the number of its women teachers reached 40,000 in the whole of France, the men's membership and activity in this Society was practically nil.

If there was great need for catechism in Paris and its environs before the war, one may judge of the necessities of today, from the number of priests who died in the army from wounds or disease, the present dearth of vocations, and the enormous propaganda carried on by subversive agencies such as Communism and the public schools with their non-religious and anti-religious program.

Four years ago however, two groups of men undertook to teach catechism, each group numbering from three to six workers. In 1924, these groups had increased to 16; they were 28 in 1926, and today there are 38 of them, comprising 180 catechists.

These men have come from the *Conferences of St. Vincent de Paul,* and from the *U. S. I. C.* (Union syndicale des ingénieurs catholiques), an association of the present and former students of various engineering schools, some of whom have already attained high position in their professions.

Their work is mainly among children who have already made their First Communion and who while attending the public " lay " schools are not in touch with any Catholic " *patronage.*" These children are known ironically as the " perseverers " — because so many of them do *not* persevere in religious practices.

The lay catechists make a special appeal to the large class of persons who usually regard the priest as a mere mercenary seeking his living through religion. In these lay catechists, all see either students whose future is assured, or professional men who have already gained lucrative posts: hence the people whom they try to help conclude that these men are thoroughly disinterested.

Much water has slipped under the bridge since 1886 and since the Encyclical of Pope Pius X, but at last the tide is turning. Patient insistence on the importance of catechetical work and constant help and encouragement given to the few men who may be willing to undertake it must sooner or later succeed in making it a real item even in a Men's Sodality.

DIFFICULTIES ANSWERED

P. H. I. asks:

1) The Fathers of one of our residences in the missions are also in charge of the parish; the Provincial appoints them and the Bishop approves them; the latter also approves the Sodality Directors.

Is the approval of the Director by the Bishop absolutely necessary so that if it be lacking, reception into the Sodality would be invalid?

2) A sodality was erected in the parish church. For 50 years, the Sodalists from four dependent villages have gone to the parish church for their meetings. Can they have their ordinary meetings in their own village chapels on occasion of the priest's monthly visits there? [If so, they would not return any more (for that purpose) to the parish church].

Answer to 1) No! For valid reception it suffices that the Director be appointed by Fr. Provincial because the Sodality was erected by Very Rev. Father General.

Hence too if the Director be changed suddenly, there is no need (for valid reception) to seek first the Bishop's approval of the new Director.

Answer to 2) There is no objection if now and then there be a Director's talk or even a reception in the four dependent chapels, but it is not permitted to transfer thither permanently all the religious acts of the Sodality. The reason is that the Sodality was erected in the parish church — hence it is the principal sanctuary for meetings and it ought to remain such for absolutely all the Sodalists although they live in another village.

LARGE SODALITIES

P. S. R. writes:

" Our Sodality paper some time ago (1927, n. 2, p. 10) treating of the number of the Sodalities, asserted among other things that in 1903, in 14 German dioceses, (leaving many, e. g. all of Bavaria, out of the count), there were 1,413 Sodalities of Our Lady. And to every one of these Sodalities, the paper assigns 10,000 members, adding that the Ratisbon Sodality is one of the smallest and yet has 8,000 members, while that of Altötting claims 14,000. This seems fabulous!

" So I should like to know ***what is to be thought*** of those numbers and of Sodalities with such large membership. Moreover, how can a Director really ***know and lead so many*** Sodalists? Are any of *Ours* at the head of such Sodalities?

Answer: As to **the number of Sodalities,** it must be admitted that it is **far greater** than that asserted by your Sodality paper.

But to attribute about **10,000 Sodalists to every one** of those Sodalities is a **gross exaggeration.** Where in the world did your paper get its information?

As to the **Ratisbon** Sodality, it claims not 8,000 but more than **9,000** members and **Altötting** has about **25,000.**

How a Director can train and direct such **armies** and have even a slight acquaintance with the individual sodalists is a mystery to me. By dint of labor, an industrious Director can doubtless keep such a Sodality in the way of a good Christian life and direct it effectively in various apostolic works, especially if he be assisted by other capable priests. Nevertheless, it seems to me a very difficult business to train such large masses to what the Rules of the Sodality of Our Lady demand.

Unfortunately, it must be said that some of those **Sodalities** are such **in name only.** I know of one which **anybody may join;** all he need do is go to the sacristy and **sign the Sodality register.**

The largest Sodality under our direction (in Germany at least is at Munich with Father Rupert Mayer as Director in chief. It has 5,000 members. See an account of it in the article " *Men's Sodality Jubilees* ", page 2.

Sodalist Martyrs in Mexico [1]

The Sodalist victims of the persecution in Mexico, who were mentioned in « *Acies Ordinata* » last year, have been the subject of many inquiries, the writers wishing to know definitely where, when, under what director and, at what age, they became Sodalists and what their relations were with the Society.

We shall answer as well we can repeating somewhat and adding new bits of information.

Emanuel Melgarejo, at ten years of age was admitted to the Sodality in 1920 by *Father James Ramirez, S. J.*, then stationed at one of our residences in Mexico City. Whether Melgarejo was a student in any of our colleges, we do not know.

Joachim Silva studied in our *College of Mascarones* and was a Sodalist but we do not *when* or *where* he became such.

Of the *martyrs of Leon,* **Nicholas Navarro, Joseph Valencia Gallardo, Salvator Vargas** and **Ezechiel Gomez,** were all members of the Sodality directed in Leon by our *Father Philip Arés* until he was exiled from Mexico. Joseph V. Gallardo was Prefect of the Sodality and Salvator Vargas was its Secretary. Which of these young men were educated by us, we do not know, but we quote their eulogy from a letter of *Father Arés,* who is now at our residence in Trinidad, Colorado, U.S. A.

« It cuts me to the heart to learn that my Sodalists have been shot and killed. In them my best boys have left me, those who were the foremost in fervor and activity. They were just the ones who were most intimate with me. I have their letters at hand and shall always keep them as records of my sons in Christ, which afford many evidences of their bravery. Ever since I became Director of the Sodality, not a week went by that I did not receive a letter from some one of them; they used to ask advice of me and tell me about the situation-my replies to them were letters of instruction, counsel- and encouragement. And certainly the boys did not belie my hopes, and today I love them more than ever, because I see their fidelity. I gave them the spiritual exercises, admitted them to the Sodality and was their confessor.

"Their families wrote me and sent me the story of their death along with photographs of them taken in life and after death. Their families thanked me for having

(1) In accord with the prohibitions of Pope Urban VIII, by using the term « *martyr* », and similar expressions, no pretense is made of anticipating the judgment of the Church.

taught the boys the path of virtue, and they tell me that I ought to be filled with joy at having four of my sons, martyrs. »

We shall be very thankful to our Mexican Fathers if they can furnish us with any new facts concerning the life and death of these and of other heroes of the Sodality. These young men and boys are glories of *the Society*, the *Catholic Young Men's Association*, and *the Sodality*; their martyrdoms bind the Sodality closer to the Society. These Sodalists dying for « Christ the King », show the world what an excellent training the Sodality of Our Lady gives its members, and how it lives up to its motto: « *Per Mariam ad Jesum* ».

CHRONICLE

Zaragoza, Spain. The Sodality of Women University Students, though small in numbers, is full of apostolic zeal, as is proved by the public and private sessions of their *academies*, by the *lectures* they deliver and especially by their *catechetical work*, in which they have been active since the foundation of the Sodality in 1925. After a week of hard study, they spend hours on Sunday, teaching catechism to 100 little children, whose temporal necessities they also help to relieve. ("*Estrella del Mar,*" Madrid, 1927, n. 207, p. 354).

In Zaragoza also, the **Young Men's Sodality** of Our Lady and St. Aloysius, practice a similar apostolate on Sunday afternoons with hundreds of boys and young men of the "working classes." Three catechism centers are in operation, one of 80 boys who have already made their first Communion; another of 150 boys; and a third attended by young laborers of 15 years and upwards.

Many of these youngsters have been coming voluntarily to the catechism classes for five and six years, an eloquent proof of the affection with which they are treated. Along with this increase of pupils, goes that of the Sodalist-catechists, — where at the beginning there were only five or six, today there are twenty. The founders who began with only 10 or 20 pupils, were stoned in the streets by other boys of the quarter, but now those boys have been tamed and are counted among the total of 240 pupils.

In the St. Peter Claver center, the hour of catechism is followed by **sports,** principally football, and on rainy days there are **moving pictures** and **raffles** of playthings.

These energetic Sodalists, all of whom are either **professional students or recent graduates,** do not confine themselves to the work of the Catechism centers; they also do much to secure the attendance of the children at Mass on Sundays, organize religious functions for them, such as monthly Communion (in which both parents and Sodalists often participate) and they also visit the homes of the parents, so as to obtain the withdrawal of the children from "lay" Protestant schools. Last year when for the first time, all the Catechism Centers of Zaragoza numbering thousands of pupils, went in procession through the streets of the city to communicate in the famous Basilica of Our Lady of the Pillar, the Sodalist catechists, each wearing his ribbon and medal, marshalled their young charges, through interminable lines of spectators.

("*Estrella del Mar*" 1927, p. 425).

The **Barcelona Young Men's Sodality** sent **38 catechists** every Sunday and holyday during the past year, to a workingmen's quarter in the city. From October, 1926, to June, 1927, 20,861 boys assisted at the Catechism classes, 7,232 attended at Mass and 3,015 communicated.

Chile. Last year, the Supreme Council of the **National Federation of Men's Sodalities** did very much to make a success of the National Eucharistic Day. (In 1926, the Council sent delegates for this purpose to 43 towns).

The Supreme Council also convened meetings of the Sodalities at the various episcopal sees.

1) To do homage to the bishops and to know their desires;

2) To study together the means of helping the bishops in their projects, especially in sustaining religious worship and religious instruction;

3) So that each Sodality might give an account of its life and apostolate, be stimulated to greater progress and take up the practice of weekly meetings;

4) To see how every parish might have at least a men's Sodality and perhaps another for women and a third for young workingmen.

5) To found diocesan Sodality Councils.

Linz, Austria. The Young Ladies Sodality of the parish celebrated "**Mother's Day**" with tableaux representing: *the mother by the cradle; at work; resting with her children; parting with her daughter; at prayer; the mother's grave; Mary, the Heavenly Mother.* "*Mariengarten,*" Wien, 1927, p. 23).

Favors ascribed to Joachim Silva

It is common report in Mexico that favors in the nature of miracles have followed the invocation of **Joachim Silva.** The following are known to be certain.

A matron, suffering from a cancerous tumor, on being informed by her physicians that she could not recover, implored the help of Joachim and immediately felt that she had been heard by him, as the deadly illness left her.

A man had a debt coming due on a certain day but was without funds to pay it; he had recourse to Joachim, and not in vain. On the very day that the debt became due, a perfect stranger met him and gave him as much money as he needed.

A woman who had two houses idle for a year, and a tenant in another who refused to pay his rent or vacate, had turned to Joachim in her distress. Three days later, the vacant houses were rented, the unwilling tenant moved away and the house was immediately rented to another who paid in advance. The grateful proprietress made special inquiries as to the dwelling of Joachim's parents, and went to tell them of her good fortune.

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Superiorum permissu.

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